REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the specification, a number of paragraphs at pages 2 and 3, as identified above, have been amended.

Claims 1 – 5, 7 – 12, and 14 remain in the application.

Claims 6 and 13 have been canceled.

New dependent claims 15 – 22 have been added.

Claim 1

Amended claim 1 combines the subject matter of claim 1 and claim 6 as originally filed, and includes further amendments to better define the scope of the invention. Amended claim 1 requires "at least one passive component", "an identification module...", "a tester interconnected with said at least one passive component", and a processor "for monitoring with said tester whether a performance characteristic for said passive component is within an acceptable tolerance as specified by said component information stored in said identification module". This amendment is supported, for example, by the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 8 of the specification as filed. No new matter has been added.

Meinema discloses a catheter sensor and memory unit which can be coupled to signal processing and conditioning circuitry. Meinema fails to disclose "a tester interconnected with said at least one passive component" and a processor "for monitoring with said tester whether a performance characteristic for said passive component is within an acceptable tolerance", as required by amended claim 1. Therefore, Meinema cannot be said to anticipate amended claim

1.

Goldring discloses an electro-optical coupler for coupling a fiberoptic catheter to a catheter oximeter processing apparatus. As disclosed at col. 5, lines 45 – 68, Goldring relies on a calibration device having known characteristics, such as a reference block, to test relative measurement characteristics (e.g. reflectivity) of a particular set-up. As noted at col. 6, lines 1 – 10, this is done for the purposes of determining whether errors are being generated due to formation of deposits on a calibration tip, for example. Goldring fails to disclose, for example, a processor for monitoring with a tester whether a performance characteristic for a passive component is within an acceptable tolerance as specified by component information stored in the identification module.

For the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that amended claim 1 is patentably distinguishable from Meinema and Goldring.

Claims 2 – 5, and 7 – 9

Claims 2 – 5, and 7 – 9 depend from amended claim 1. In view of the above reasons for amended claim 1, it is submitted that these dependent claims are patentably distinguishable from Meinema and Goldring.

Claim 10

Claim 10 has been amended to better define the scope of the invention. Amended claim 10 requires "a non-volatile memory storing specifications for a passive component", "a tester for detecting signals at an input and output of said passive component", and "a processor operatively associated with said non-volatile memory and said tester for monitoring whether a performance

characteristic of said passive component as detected by said tester is within an acceptable tolerance as specified by said specifications stored in said non-volatile memory".

Meinema fails to disclose a tester for detecting signals at an input and output of said passive component, and a processor operatively associated with said non-volatile memory and said tester for monitoring whether a performance characteristic of said passive component as detected by said tester is within an acceptable tolerance as specified by said specifications stored in said non-volatile memory.

Goldring fails to disclose a processor for monitoring whether a performance characteristic for a passive component is within an acceptable tolerance as specified by component information stored in the identification module.

For the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that amended claim 10 is patentably distinguishable from Meinema and Goldring.

Claim 11

In amended claim 11, claims 11 and 13 as filed have been combined and further amended to better define the scope of the invention. Amended claim 11 requires "retrieving specification information for said passive component from said non-volatile memory", "sampling an input signal to and an output signal from said passive component", "determining performance characteristics for said passive component based on said sampling", and "comparing said performance characteristic with said retrieved specification information to determine whether said performance characteristic is within an acceptable tolerance of said specification information".

Meinema and Goldring fail to disclose all elements of amended claim 11. For example, these references fail to disclose "comparing said performance characteristic with said retrieved specification information to determine whether said performance characteristic is within an

acceptable tolerance of said specification information".

For the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that amended claim 11 is patentably distinguishable from Meinema and Goldring.

Claims 12 and 14

Claims 12 and 14 depend from amended claim 11. In view of the above arguments for claim 11, it is submitted that dependent claims 12 and 14 are also patentably distinguishable from Goldring.

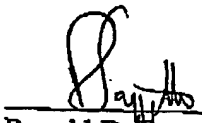
New Claims 15 – 22

New claims 15 – 22 have been added to recite particular embodiments of the invention.

As new claims 15 – 22 depend from either claim 1 or 11, it is submitted that new claims 15 – 22 are patentably distinguishable from the references of record.

With the above amendments and arguments, it is believed that all of the Examiner's objections have been addressed. Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,



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